

Topic Page: [Ramses II, King of Egypt](#)

Definition: **Ramses the Great** from *DK Eyewitness Books: Mummy*

The famous Ramses II ruled for 67 years, from 1279 to 1212 BCE. He had a reputation as a great warrior, which he seems to have greatly exaggerated. He and his many wives had over 100 children, and he was probably in his nineties when he died. Ancient Egyptians were short by modern standards, around 5 ft 3 in (1.60 m) on average. But Ramses II's mummy, found in the 1881 cache, is 6ft (1.83 m) tall.



Image from: [Ramses II \(1290-1224BCE\). Head of black granite... in Encyclopedia of African History](#)

Summary Article: **Ramses II**

From *The Columbia Encyclopedia*

răm'sēz, Rameses II, or Ramesses II both: răm'Əsēz'', d. 1225 B.C., king of ancient Egypt, of the XIX dynasty. The son of Seti I, Ramses was not the heir to the throne but usurped it from his brother. He reigned for 67 years (1292–1225 B.C.). Under him Egypt acquired unprecedented splendor. His empire extended from S Syria to near the Fourth Cataract of the Nile. The most notable incident of his reign was the battle near Kadesh on the Orontes, where the Egyptians were ambushed by the Hittites. Ramses, claiming to have saved his forces single-handed, had vast texts written about his personal valor. War continued with the Hittites for about 15 years until Ramses concluded a treaty of friendship (1280) with the Hittite king and married (1267) a Hittite princess.

Ramses left monuments throughout Egypt. The principal ones are probably the temple at Karnak, which he completed; the Rameseum, his mortuary temple, at Thebes; the temple at Luxor; and the great rock temple at Abu Simbel with four seated figures of the king on the facade. The period of his rule was characterized by great luxury, increased slavery, and the growth of a mercenary army, all of which led to the final decline of Egypt. He was probably the pharaoh of the exile mentioned in the Old Testament. Merneptah succeeded him.

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Ramses II. (2018). In P. Lagasse, & Columbia University, *The Columbia encyclopedia* (8th ed.). New York, NY: Columbia University Press. Retrieved from https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/ramses_ii_king_of_egypt



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